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12 December 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR: The China Intelligence Activities
Coordination Group

SUBJECT: The Strategic Warning Problem
(China)

1. By USIB action in Executive Session, 20 November 1969, the Director of Central Intelligence has directed that our Group prepare a report on the strategic warning problem as it relates to Communist China. Although no specific deadline was set, we were directed to proceed expeditiously; we should accordingly aim for submission of the report to USIB in the second quarter of 1970.

2. This will be the first such report concerning China. There have been four strategic warning reports produced concerning the USSR: National Intelligence Estimates in 1957, 1961, and 1966; and the Report of the Strategic Warning Working Group, "The Strategic Warning Problem" (Special Limited Distribution), approved by USIB on 20 November 1969. This latter report raised the China strategic warning problem; USIB discussion of that paper gave rise to the request for the present China paper.

3. Preparing a China report will, certainly, entail a number of problems: e.g., definition, scope, time-span, intelligence gaps, uncertainty concerning future US collection and monitoring systems, etc. We will doubtless also encounter a set of procedural problems, not least that of exotic special security classifications. We nevertheless should have a lively

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and educational time of it in breaking new ground, and in helping to discipline and refine collective USG wisdom on the inscrutable China problem.

4. Attached to this memo is a draft outline and scope paper for our report. I would appreciate your meeting with me -- on those questions, on the general problem of how best to proceed, and on the best division of labor to accomplish our report -- on Thursday, 18 December 1969, at Headquarters Building, Langley, Virginia, in the Director's Conference Room (7D64), at 2:00 P. M.

5. Please confirm by telephoning [REDACTED] indicating as well any additional officers (and their clearances) from your agencies whom you may wish to sit in with us on the 18th.

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[REDACTED]
China Intelligence Activities Coordinator

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Attachment

Copies to: Mr. William Gleysteen, State
[REDACTED]
Mr. John Holdridge, NSC
[REDACTED]
Mr. Herbert Taylor, Army
Capt. E. F. Rectanus, Navy
Col. Lowell E. May, Air Force
Dr. Charles Reichardt, AEC
Mr. Fred Cassidy, FBI

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THE STRATEGIC WARNING PROBLEM (CHINA)
PROPOSED OUTLINE AND SCOPE

Introduction

Summary

Present and future situations

Sources and their capabilities

Analysis of warning information

Conclusions

Recommendations

Annexes

- I. The definition of strategic warning with respect to Communist China, East Asia, the USSR, and the US; the problem of assessing the China threat.
 - a. "Strategic warning" in this context is not a concept of magnitude of intent, but essentially one of time, as distinguished from "tactical warning" of attacks already launched or underway.

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- b. Accordingly, the paper will include discussion of strategic warning of possible attacks (major and limited) by Chinese regular or irregular forces or means -- including MRBM's -- upon Japan, South Korea, Okinawa, Taiwan, the Nationalist-held offshore islands, Hong Kong, the Philippines, South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, Burma, and India.
- c. Discussion of strategic attack against the USA will for the most part assume a late 1970's situation. Treatment of US ability to monitor such questions at such a time will of course be difficult -- but manageable.
- d. Among the substantive problems to be tackled in c will be that of differentiating between a Chinese and a Soviet ICBM attack upon the USA and US targets.
- e. The paper should include the question of possible Chinese-initiated clandestine entry of nuclear weapons into US territory and bases.
- f. The paper should take a stab at what intelligence and strategic warning improvements should be reasonably expected in the event of future US diplomatic representation in Ulan Bator. Ditto re Peking.
- g. The paper should include discussion of strategic warning of Chinese attack against the USSR and Soviet targets, now and in the future.

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II. Chinese Communist Attack Forces and US
Monitoring Capabilities

III. Strategic Warning in the Political Field

IV. Strategic Warning in the Economic Field

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VI. Overhead Reconnaissance as a Source for
Strategic Warning

VII. SIGINT as a Source for Strategic Warning

VIII. FBIS and Strategic Warning

IX. [REDACTED]

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X. Indications Reporting by US Military Attachés
and Foreign Service Personnel, wherever located

XI. Third Country Liaison Assets

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